THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY
pro bono humani generis
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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 27, 1988

Professor Robert H. Cannon, Jr.
Chairman
President's Commission on the National
Medal of Science
National Science Foundation
Washington, D.C. 20050

Dear Professor Cannon:

It is a pleasure to endorse the nomination of Arnold O. Beckman for the National Medal of Science. Dr. Beckman's career as an inventor and entrepreneur, civic leader and philanthropist is very well known and has been documented by Dick Zare. The Beckman Instruments Company which is so much his personal creation has become a formidable part of U.S. technology, a worthy exemplar from both an economic and technological standpoint. Those instruments are truly indispensable both to the conduct of biomedical and chemical research, and to life-saving medical diagnostic procedures; and they are also widely used in process control in a wide range of manufacturing industries.

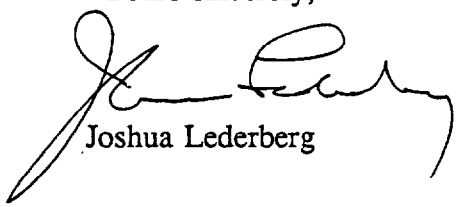
His leadership as Chairman of Caltech's Board of Trustees on which he served for over twenty years and chaired for ten was an important supporting function for one of the world's premier scientific institutions. More recently he has engaged in a program of philanthropic support for scientific research at a range of academic institutions which is notable not only for its breathtaking magnitude but for the good taste and intensity of discriminating judgment that Dr. Beckman has exercised in a very personal way.

Dr. Beckman has remarked to me what a difficult choice he faced as between an entrepreneurial and an academic career shortly after his invention and marketing of the first electronic pH meter. My response, at a symposium held here in honor of his 85th birthday was:

"The news of science usually concerns what results a scientist has achieved, not how he has found them. The methods and instruments used and developed in the course of a scientist's research are rarely considered news. All too often, the role of instrumentation -- from the tedious steps in design, to commercial production, to routine maintenance -- is taken for granted in the conduct of a scientific life. Yet, scientific progress continues to depend on the invention and refinement of tools and techniques."

It is hard for me to imagine a worthier candidate for the National Medal of Science.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg